

VZCZCXRO1980
PP RUEHMA RUEHPA
DE RUEHNMM #0625 1761214

ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 241214Z JUN 08

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4387
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0697
RUZEHAA/CDR USEUCOM INTEL VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFIISS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

UNCLAS NIAMEY 000625

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PTER ASEC MOPS FR NG

SUBJECT: NIGER: UPDATE ON FRENCH HOSTAGES

REF: NIAMEY 616

¶1. (U) The MNJ has claimed on its website that the GON delayed for 48 hours giving authorization to the ICRC travel to the north to pick up the four French uranium workers kidnapped on June 22 (reftel). It also claims that early in the morning of June 24 the Nigerien Armed Forces used recently acquired attack helicopters to bomb MNJ positions, which it suggests puts at risk the four French hostages as well as a number of government troops being held by the MNJ.

¶2. (SBU) The French DCM confirmed that as of 2:00 p.m. local time, the MNJ still held the four French hostages.

ALLEN